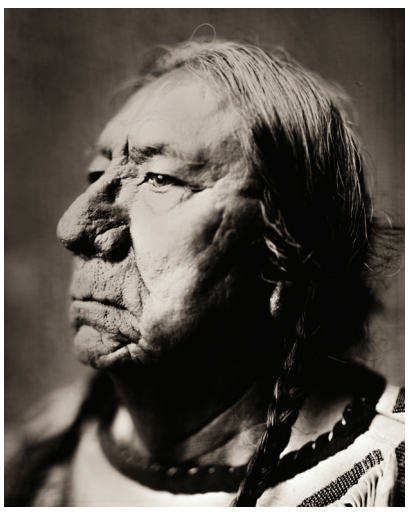
NorthernPlainsNativeAmericans
AModernWetPlatePerspective
ShaneBalkowitschAmbrotypist



"I humble myself, when my people speak my name", so said Sitting Bull.

Shane Balkowitsch humbly asked me if he could take a wet plate of me...

Out of humbleness and respect grows greatness.

Just have a look at Shane's work.

December 8th, 2020
Ernie (Crowfoot) LaPointe
The Great Grandson of Sitting Bull

First Published in 2022 by

Shane Balkowitsch
Nostalgic Glass Wet Plate Studio
2703 Big Sky Circle
Bismarck, ND 58503

shane@balkowitsch.com

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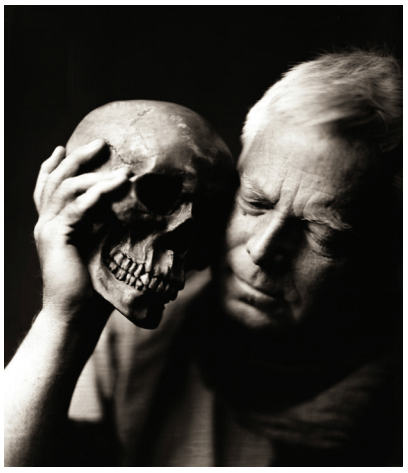
Shane Balkowitsch

Loving Artistry and Respect
at a Critical Moment in the History of America

Clay Jenkinson



It is an honor and a privilege to write this foreword to Shane Balkowitsch's second book of Native American photographs.

"He's taking pictures of Indians dressing up like in the olden days," someone told me on the street not long ago. This was such a sad mischaracterization of what the artist and photographer Shane Balkowitsch is doing in his studio on the northern end of Bismarck, North Dakota. On Fridays, but not otherwise, he takes photographs of Native Americans (and some others) who have sought him out, wearing the clothing of their choice, sometimes traditional ("like in the olden days") and sometimes contemporary, sometimes a combination of both. His goal is deeply ambitious. He intends to make 1,000 glass plate photographic portraits of Native Americans and to present them both to the individuals who sit for him and to museums and historical societies throughout North America—and sometimes beyond. He is currently at Image 538.

Shane's purpose is not to photograph Native Americans as if the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had never happened—the mission of the great Edward S. Curtis (1868-1952)—but to record individuals as they wish to be seen, to give Native Americans the opportunity to explore their self-image, perhaps at times a fantasy image, in a safe space where who they are and how they see themselves are certain to be respected and admired.

Shane Balkowitsch is doing something that is extremely important. He has earned a fair amount of acclaim in the eight years he has devoted to the project. The cultural gratitude of those who know his work will only grow over time. In spite of all that is better now, Native Americans remain a sometimes-invisible population at the margins of the dominate white community that occupies their sovereign lands. Balkowitsch is granting Native Americans agency—one remarkable portrait at a time—and reminding all of us, in often magnificent visual terms, that Native Americans are still here, that they have deep cultural pride, that they intend to maintain as many traditional ways as possible, in fact they intend to recover cultural traditions that were nearly crushed out by the juggernaut of America's westering, and that they live in two worlds simultaneously and have no intention of being absorbed or erased.

I'm not quite sure why Shane is doing this work. It's abundantly clear that it's a labor of love—and a very expensive one both in time and money. I'm not altogether sure that Shane knows why he is doing this work. He can rattle off a solid narrative, of course, but my sense is that in some ways this vocation is as much a mystery to him as it is to the rest of us. It is a calling, but just how he was called is a bit elusive. He has given some of the best energies of his life to that vocation and it's clear that he will fulfill his goals, and then probably keep moving the goalpost down the field until health or pure exhaustion puts an end to the project. It is clear that his Native American subjects trust him, and his studio calendar is full months into the future.

“ Shane Balkowitsch is doing something that is extremely important. ”

“He’s taking pictures,” said my friend. The technological innovations of the last thirty years have changed photography almost beyond recognition. Millions of photographs are taken every day now, perhaps hundreds of millions. The vast majority of them are never printed. They live now almost entirely in digital space—a realm that turns out to be unstable and vulnerable in a number of ways. Cameras as we used to know them—devices that had the sole purpose of taking photographs—are disappearing, replaced by the “camera function” of smart phones, ingenious machines that also follow the stock exchange, report and predict the weather, track satellites crossing the sky overhead, purchase everything from cars to bonsai trees, search for the nearest gas station, book hotels, play full-length feature films, count our heartbeats and the number of steps we take every day, show us how to drive to the hidden lecture hall, and—oh yes—make telephone calls. If you watch people taking pictures with their smart phones, you will soon learn that the idea of composing the photograph has mostly disappeared. Seldom does the user give more than a second to composing the shot before pushing the “shutter release.”

Someone attending a niece’s birthday today might take 250 smart phone pictures in a single afternoon—in 1980 it might have been 10-15 early, low resolution, digital photographs; in 1975 a roll of 35mm film or one cartridge in a Kodak Instamatic camera; in 1950 a single spiraling roll of film carefully loaded in a Kodak Brownie camera; and back in Edward S. Curtis’ time (ca. 1910) a few glass plates exposed in the course of a long and technically exacting day. Someone attending an Elton John concert today is likely to lift a smartphone on tiptoe over fifty rows of standing and gesticulating fans to take a dozen still photographs or a two-minute video, all without looking through a viewfinder or even more than gamely pointing the camera in the right direction. The camara, such as it is, requires the human holding it to do nothing but push a button—auto-focus, auto aperture, image stabilization, color balance—and let technology do the rest.

“ There is no coercion, manipulation, cajolery, or bribery—the tools of an earlier generation of photographers who made Native Americans their subject. ”

It’s not clear that what a smartphone does today can really be called a photograph. A young person elbowing her way into the Sistine Chapel in Rome with a selfie stick is not really taking a photograph. She is taking a selfie. She is proving that she was there, checking off an item from a global must-see list that includes the Golden Gate Bridge, Stonehenge, the Taj Mahal, the Eifel Tower, Machu Picchu, and St. Paul’s of London. The selfie taken in front of some cultural landmark is more a personalized twenty-first-century postcard than a photograph. The medium is the message—and the message is just that “Kilroy was here.” Most people are so busy getting the selfie that they don’t pause to drink in the genius of Michelangelo. It wasn’t the Sistine Chapel they were after; it was a cultural passport book they were getting stamped.

Shane Balkowitsch works at the far other end of the spectrum. He takes photographs using technology that dates back to 1851. Each photograph is painstakingly composed on a wet glass plate that has been coated in a darkroom with a silver iodide solution. His 8x10-inch camera has no shutter. When everything is just right, he carefully removes the lens cover from the camera and counts out ten seconds, while the person being photographed remains perfectly still and holds whatever facial expression she or he composed while Shane made his last adjustments. Slowing things down to a glacial pace, knowing that you are going to get one or at most two chances to get it right, encourages both photographer and subject to take a few breaths, relax into the moment, and replace the usual automatic snapshot smile with a truer, deeper revelation of identity and spirit.

" But Native Americans did not vanish. Curtis was wrong. Theodore Roosevelt was wrong. They hung on, resisted, and persevered. "

Then the artist and his subject go into the darkroom together to develop the glass plate. As the image begins to emerge in the developing tray, it's impossible not to think of photography as magic. It forces everyone who witnesses the process to jump technical paradigms and think of photography in a new (actually very old) way. Some people seeing their image slowly emerge on the glass in that dimly lit darkroom gasp. Others cry—or laugh. It takes about half an hour to make a single photograph. The snapshot has no place in this exacting retro universe. In fact, Balkowitsch says he never owned a camera until he took his first wet plate photograph—of his brother—in 2012. He is 52 years old.

Native American subjects exchange greetings with Shane, whom most of them have never met, then retire to the green room to change clothes or settle their hair and makeup. When they emerge, Shane explains the process and asks each subject how she or he would like to be photographed: sitting or standing, in jeans and a t-shirt or in marvelous traditional regalia? Your choice. When the subject hesitates and attempts to defer to Shane for posing suggestions, he gently insists that only that unique individual can make that decision. There is no coercion, manipulation, cajolery, or bribery—the tools of an earlier generation of photographers who made Native Americans their subject. It's a negotiation only in the sense that Shane explains that the subject must be able to hold the pose for a full ten seconds, that it would probably be a mistake to smile because it is hard for the muscles of the face to hold a smile for that long, and that the subject should blink several times before the glass plate is exposed.

We know now that the great Edward Curtis frequently chose garments and ornaments for his subjects, that he carried trunks of props and sometimes made or commissioned props in the tribal community he was visiting, Curtis sought to photograph Native Americans either in traditional clothing or what could pass as traditional clothing, not in their everyday clothes. In fact, Curtis and others worked hard to remove anything from the photograph that indicated white contact with the tribe. He used the limited darkroom techniques of his time to "photoshop out" an alarm clock in his photograph of "In a Piegan Lodge."

Curtis came at his great project as a cultural romantic. Like most white people of his era, including some of the best thinkers and cultural leaders, Curtis believed in what we now know as the Myth of the Vanishing Indian—that Native Americans were soon either going to be fully assimilated into the dominant culture's ways and means or they would perhaps just disappear altogether from the American landscape. Some of the smartest (and at times most sympathetic) thought leaders in the United States believed that Native Americans faced a stark choice: biological survival but cultural genocide ("Kill the Indian, Save the Man")—or actual extinction. Individuals like Curtis, Frances Densmore, Frederic Remington, and Natalie Curtis, and before them George Catlin, Karl Bodmer, Prince Maximilian, Charles Russell, and others, believed that they needed to "get it all down before it's too late." In his foreword to the first volume of Curtis' massive North American Indian, President Theodore Roosevelt wrote, "Our generation offers the last chance for doing what Mr. Curtis has done. The Indian as he has hitherto been is on the point of passing away.... It would be a veritable calamity if a vivid and truthful record of these conditions were not kept."

In 1894, James Earle Fraser captured the mood in white America perfectly with his iconic "End of the Trail" sculpture, depicting a Native American slumped over a drooping pony holding onto a lance that is now harmlessly pointed at the ground.

For Frazer it was even more dramatic than that. The famous sculpture was inspired by a conversation in which he heard an old timer in South Dakota say that one of these days the last Indian will be seen on a hill overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Similarly, Edward Curtis' favorite photograph, "The Vanishing Race" (1904), depicts six Navajo men riding away from the camera towards the faraway horizon, casting heavy shadows of themselves on the right, one man turning in his saddle to look back, like Lot's wife, as their proud but defeated culture leaves the American stage. "The thought which this picture is meant to convey," Curtis wrote, "is that of the Indians as a race, already shorn of their tribal strength and stripped of their primitive dress, are passing into the darkness of an unknown future."

" What you see in the faces of virtually all of Shane's subjects is dignity. And pride. "

But Native Americans did not vanish. Curtis was wrong. Theodore Roosevelt was wrong. They hung on, resisted, and persevered. They suffered grievously during the decades of intense white aggression, often couched in open calls for extermination, but they did not relinquish their values, their social structure, or their traditions in order "to get on board" with the dominant culture's ways. For decades, from 1890 to about 1970, most Native Americans chose to do their persevering and their cultural recovery below the radar, so as not to attract any more assimilationist attention than necessary. But in the last few decades Native Americans have begun to assert themselves in the public arena, to openly defy some of the policies and the material homogenization of American life, and to demand respect for their rights, their sovereignty, and their cultural traditions. Nobody observing the Native American world in 2022 would argue that this is the golden age of the Lakota or the Cheyenne or the Crow or the Clatsop or the Mandan or the Assiniboine, but it is clear to everyone that there is a truly remarkable return of cultural cohesion and cultural confidence in Indian Country. Fortunately, Shane Balkowitsch is standing by with his retro camera and his extraordinary artistic talent to document this important moment in the history of the United States. I think we are living at the moment when the Native American Renaissance really took off. Some white people feel uncomfortable in the face of a more confident, more assertive Native America community, but they will adjust over time.

What you see in the faces of virtually all of Shane's subjects is dignity. And pride. Some of it is fierce pride—an aggressive pride. There is at times even a hint of cultural arrogance. Shane's studio is one of the few places on the northern Great Plains where Native Americans can present themselves to the world in any way they wish without any danger of being shamed or derided or distrusted. You can see it in their faces—for a moment they get to embrace their deeper and often submerged identity. They do not have to adjust their authenticity or spontaneity to conform to the cultural expectations or judgment of the non-Indian community. Some of Shane's subjects appear to pose as they assume they might have looked in a world that has not been profoundly damaged and disrupted by Euro-American civilization.

Whenever a non-Native artist chooses to depict Native Americans (or any other historically subjugated group), the specter of cultural appropriation raises its head. Cultural appropriation may be defined as "taking or using without permission the nomenclature, the iconography, the craft work, the rites and traditions, the narrative, or the clothing of another people, especially a historically subjugated people." There are gross and obvious examples of cultural appropriation: Washington Redskins, Cleveland Indians, an Anglo runway model wearing a fringed buckskin skirt and a headdress. Then there are less obnoxious but nevertheless clear appropriations: talking in a board meeting about "burying the hatchet," or saying, "we should pow wow about this" (that's not what happens at a pow wow) or placing a dream catcher

" Shane's photographs are beautiful in several important ways. You cannot page through the portraits here (or in the first of his books, Northern Plains Americans: A Modern Wet Plate Perspective) without feeling awe in the face of the beauty of his subjects, beautiful in ways much more authentic and profound than we see in the fantasy avatars featured in Glamour Magazine and on electronic billboards in Times Square. "

ornament on the rear-view mirror of your car without knowing the first thing about its cultural origins or validity. A few severe critics might accuse even Shane Balkowitsch of cultural appropriation for no other reason that he has "taken" something from Native Americans (admittedly, with their permission) that nobody has a right to own but themselves. The issue is made more confusing because no matter how pure Shane's heart, and no matter how much integrity and even selflessness he brings to the project, he comes at the end of a very long line of non-Indians who have aggrandized or enriched themselves in ways that furthered the colonization, exploitation, and stereotyping of Native Americans. Perhaps Henry David Thoreau inadvertently captured the attitude of many Native Americans to white people who "are here to help"—"If I knew for a certainty that a man was coming to my house with the conscious design of doing me good, I should run for my life."

A few cultural critics would even argue that no white person, no matter how pure and noble his intentions, can really "see" Native Americans except through his confused mishmash of assumptions, prejudices, conceptions and misconceptions, and the structurally racist curriculum to which he or she was exposed from an early age, not to mention the bombardment of popular culture, from John Wayne to Kevin Costner. Any outsider, particularly one born into the world of the settler colonial establishment, can only "see" Native Americans through a deformed and inaccurate lens, carrying cultural baggage that inevitably distorts the lens. But to those who love Shane's work but say it would be better, all things considered, if the work were being done by a Native American photographer, I say, would it be better if the sound engineers who recorded Martin Luther King's "I have a dream speech," on the Washington Mall on August 28, 1963, had been African Americans? Really?

It would be a grave mistake, I think, to view Shane Balkowitsch in that light. Although he does not talk about this issue much, it is clear that he has thought the matter through with great thoughtfulness. He does not go seeking for his subjects. They come voluntarily to him. He does not profit from his Native American portraits. In fact, he loses a considerable amount of money every time he takes a photograph. Nor does he ever complain about this or even call attention to the cost of his project, which he is self-financing in the quietest possible way. He is unwilling to "dress" his subjects or even suggest what they might wear for their photographs. In his preliminary conversations with his subjects in his studio, he makes no attempt to present himself as anything but what he is: a talented white photographer, all business, trained in the medical profession, who has no particular political agenda, has no "savior complex," never tries to identify himself with the native American community or strain to show political and cultural solidarity. He plays classical music and jazz in the studio on his LP record player, never the flute music of Kevin Locke or Carlos Nakai. He dresses in a chemical-stained white t-shirt, and though there are photographs on display on every wall in his studio, there are no dream catchers, calumet pipes, shields, or lances. Shane's humility in the face of the opportunity that has come his way is genuine and admirable.

Balkowitsch has won critical acclaim not just throughout North America but beyond. Most of his photographs are deposited with the State Historical Society of North Dakota, but some have found their way into museums in the United States, Europe, and Asia. He is increasingly having the opportunity to photographs Native Americans who hold prominent positions in American life, including most recently Deb Haaland, the Secretary of the Interior. Shane is not the only photographer who has undertaken an ambitious initiative to photograph Native Americans, but he appears to be indefatigable in reaching his goal of 1,000 Native American portraits, and his work

ranks with the very best in the world. He has mastered the technique. Shane has some of the genius we associate with Curtis for exploring something that is deeper than a facial expression—mood, spirit, even soul. Give the same camera to a hundred talented photographers and you are going to get one hundred good portraits, but most of them would not find their way through the character armor (the photographic mask) of the person sitting to something deeper, more authentic, more revealing, and at times more holy.

Shane is the first to remind us that glass plate photographs (if they don't fracture) hold up better than any other photographic medium, film, prints, strings of electronic data. The "resolution" of the silver crystals is higher than the most sophisticated digital cameras. Just think about how scattered and disorganized your digital photographic database is, and how difficult and tedious it would be to secure all of your photographs for the next ten generations. The plates Shane is accumulating, if safely stored, will hold up for a thousand years. I often wonder what people of that time or the seventh succeeding generation for that matter will make of this book or other derivatives of the glass plates.

As a humanities scholar and a historian, paging through this volume and its predecessor, I do at times feel a twinge of anxiety, along with considerable fascination, about the seeming preference among the Native Americans pictured here, especially males, to be photographed in a manner that seems to place them in a previous time in the history of North America. One might even say, before the Fall. They often choose to be photographed as warriors or tribal leaders, sometimes in a way that they would never be seen in public, even at a ceremony or pow wow. If we have all worked hard to dispossess ourselves of the Myth of the Vanishing Indian (the End of the Trail icon is still ubiquitous west of the Mississippi River), in part because Native Americans have insisted that they do not wish to be locked into the past (a past that may never have existed in quite the way we imagine), then are they in danger of revisiting that broken trope (though on their own terms), and clouding the narrative? I raise the question. I do not know the answer. When I see Lakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara individuals in the grocery store, auto parts store, at lectures at the North Dakota Heritage Center, at the airport, or in a restaurant, they dress in a way that is more or less identical to everyone else on the northern Great Plains. Isn't one important part of the story that Native Americans are not denizens of the anthropological museum, that they have adopted just so much of the white culture's habits as they wish and that they don't want to be regarded as "authentic Indians" only when they wear pre-contact attire? The Native American novelist Tommy Orange commented on this recently, in a discussion of his book There There. "White people always want us to dress in the same way. I know of no other culture that is expected to dress in just one way."

" The photographs that Shane Balkowitsch is creating are a monument to his creativity and civic integrity. "

On the other hand, maybe here too the medium is the message. Because Shane is self-consciously employing nineteenth century photographic techniques, perhaps everyone who enters his studio casts her or himself in a retrospective manner. I have been photographed by Mr. Balkowitsch three times. Once I wore clothing meant to invoke the look of Edward Curtis, the other time I posed with a skull in homage to Lord Olivier's Hamlet in the graveyard at Elsinore. Who's more pretentious, me, or Native Americans showing deep respect for their forebears and the traditions that gave their people a distinct cultural identity? It's something of a paradox. When I first visited the National Museum of the American Indian, I was startled by how many of the tribal exhibits worked hard to declare, "We are still here. Enjoy the artifacts, but we are still here, and we work and shop and take our recreation beside all of you, even if you don't recognize us 'out of costume.'" The same message was the refrain of the twenty-some

Native American tribes who participated in the kickoff of the Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition at the University of Virginia in January 2003: Don't imprison us in your conceptual museum along with the woolly mammoth and the Paleo Bison. We are still here."

I take great pride as a North Dakotan that Shane Balkowitsch has undertaken this project. At this point in his life, he could have taken up Ham Radio or wind surfing, but he chose to master this difficult art form instead. He might have decided to photograph 1,000 high school basketball players (a valuable undertaking) or all the prairie churches in North Dakota, but he chose to make images of Native Americans instead. What could be a better gift to North Dakota than that? If Shane's photographs have heightened the curiosity and deepened the sympathy of North Dakota's non-Indian population or inspired new respect and admiration for the fidelity of the Native American community to its multi-generational traditions, or even just provided Native Americans a platform to express their cultural pride, he has done a great thing for a community that is just now ready to do some hard re-evaluating of the history of the American West. And he has done this not by way of op ed pieces, but photographs that speak for themselves.

" The photographs that Shane Balkowitsch is creating are a monument to his creativity and civic integrity. They are a magnificent and historically important documentation of a very special moment in Native American history, particularly on the Great Plains. They are an invitation for those of us in the non-Indian community to enlighten ourselves and open our minds. "

Shane's photographs are beautiful in several important ways. You cannot page through the portraits here (or in the first of his books, Northern Plains Americans: A Modern Wet Plate Perspective) without feeling awe in the face of the beauty of his subjects, beautiful in ways much more authentic and profound than we see in the fantasy avatars featured in Glamour Magazine and on electronic billboards in Times Square.

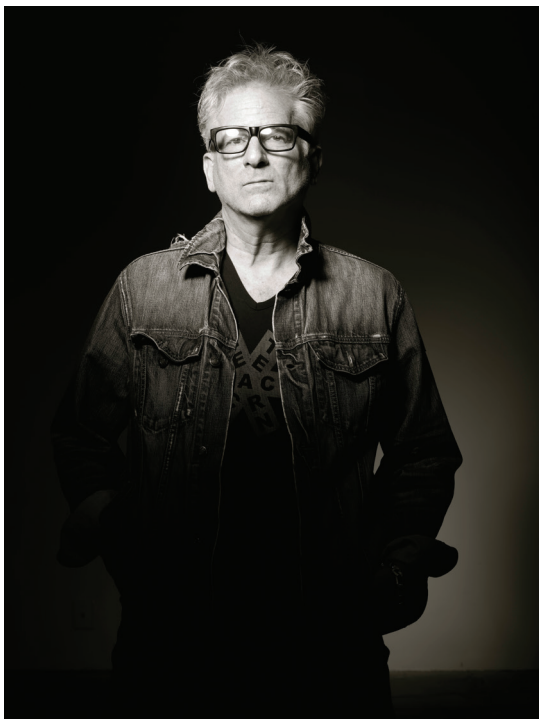
His photographs are also beautiful as three-dimensions physical artifacts. The glass plates have a beauty of their own irrespective of the image etched in its silver nitrate emulsion. They are sensuous and silvery and mysterious, even a little haunting. The plates have both heft and fragility at the same moment, and they are satisfying to hold and inspect in purely physical terms.

And these photographs evoke the beauty of Shane's spirit, which has led several Native American groups to perform gratitude ceremonies at his studio. In particular, the Mandan-Hidatsa scholar Calvin Grinnell bestowed the name Maa'ishda tehxixi Agu'agshi "Shadow Catcher" on Balkowitsch, the name some Native American communities bestowed a hundred years ago on Edward S. Curtis, who is arguably the greatest photographer who has ever made Native Americans his subject. I know that Shane regards that designation as one of the greatest honors of his life, especially given its source.

For me, it comes down to this. The photographs that Shane Balkowitsch is creating are a monument to his creativity and civic integrity. They are a magnificent and historically important documentation of a very special moment in Native American history, particularly on the Great Plains. They are an invitation for those of us in the non-Indian community to enlighten ourselves and open our minds.

They are, in my opinion, a part of the healing.

Jeffrey Sklan



All real artists know two basic truths: that they stand, informed, on the shoulders of those who preceded them, and that their body of work is merely one point on an unending creative curve. Shane Balkowitsch embraces these verities wholeheartedly, in an unrelenting and irresistible fashion. It is impossible to turn away from his images or the gazes of his sitters.

Can you know the inner artist by their work? In Balkowitsch's case, it is more likely than not. A deep reverence for his subjects is apparent. That intensity is matched by an uncompromising desire to capture the dignity of all who subject themselves to his process. Plate by plate, an astonishing and uniquely American legacy is being created. On even the briefest second thought, however, his work is indisputable proof of a universal human condition. It needs neither translation nor explanation.

Balkowitsch's portraits transcend mere beauty and skillful execution. They are important. His documentary series presents a double helix of sorts: the photographer's place on the curve is inextricably entwined with the illustrious ghosts whose ancestors travel to his studio to ensure their own.

In a hundred years, this work will be even more astonishing. A history will have been fully fleshed out for each face. There will be links that have been strengthened and lineages that have frayed into oblivion. Such is life. But for one moment, in a studio with soft and kind northern light, two strands became interwoven, never to be undone by the passage of time.

Nostalgic Glass Natural Light Studio

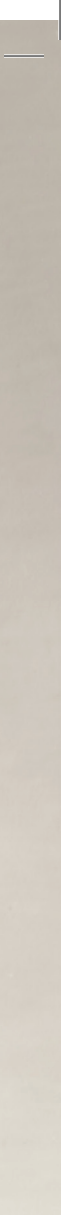
Bismarck, North Dakota

Photograph By Thomas W. Wirtz | 4 September 2020

“Eagle Child” *Aiyana Rayne Burnstick* | Peepeekisis Cree | 8 November 2019 | Plate No. 3360

“Many Bears” *Clifford Joseph Graham* | Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa | 18 January 2019 | Plate No. 3023

“Crushed Turquoise” *Debra Anne Haaland* | Laguna Pueblo | 23 June 2019 | Plate No. 3194



“Wolf Spirit” *Larry Allen Yazzie* | Meskwaki | 20 December 2019 | Plate No. 3405

“Duarte” *Brandy Rose Duarte* | Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa / Mexican | 9 November 2018 | Plate No. 2961

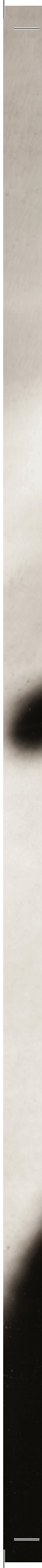
“Red Star” *Seth Charles Ramsey* | Standing Rock Sioux | 19 June 2020 | Plate No. 3541

“Holy Coyote” *Jackson David Ripley* | Arikara | 22 November 2019 | Plate No. 3379

SHSND 2014-P-025-00457

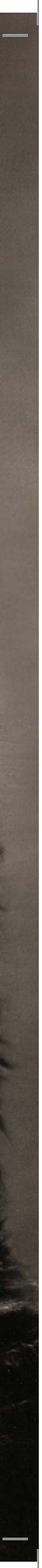
“Day Break Woman” *Jagger Mamaajii Ripley-Jaakola* | Arikara / Ojibwe | 22 November 2019 | Plate No. 3383

“Strong Life Woman” *Wiconi Suta Win* | Arikara / Dakota / Lakota | 20 November 2020 | Plate No. 3726



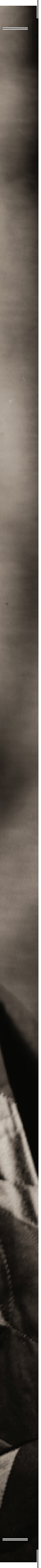
“Cherry” *Ashley Rose Cherry* | Arikara | 19 July 2019 | Plate No. 3214

“Fire” *Cheyenne Eete Kippenberger* | Seminole Tribe of Florida | 5 March 2021 | Plate No. 3824



“White Bull” *Cipriano Joseph White Bull* | Hunkpapa Lakota / Cochiti Pueblo | 6 September 2021 | Plate No. 3285

“White” *Eugene Jesse White IV* | Arikara | 26 March 2021 | Plate No. 3850



“Evening Star Woman” *Otakwan Acahkos Iskwiw* | Metis | 23 August 2019 | Plate No. 3258

“Little Fox” *Valahlena Rahyne Steeprock* | Red Lake Nation / Mohawk / Seneca / Ponca | 26 March 2021 | Plate No. 3847

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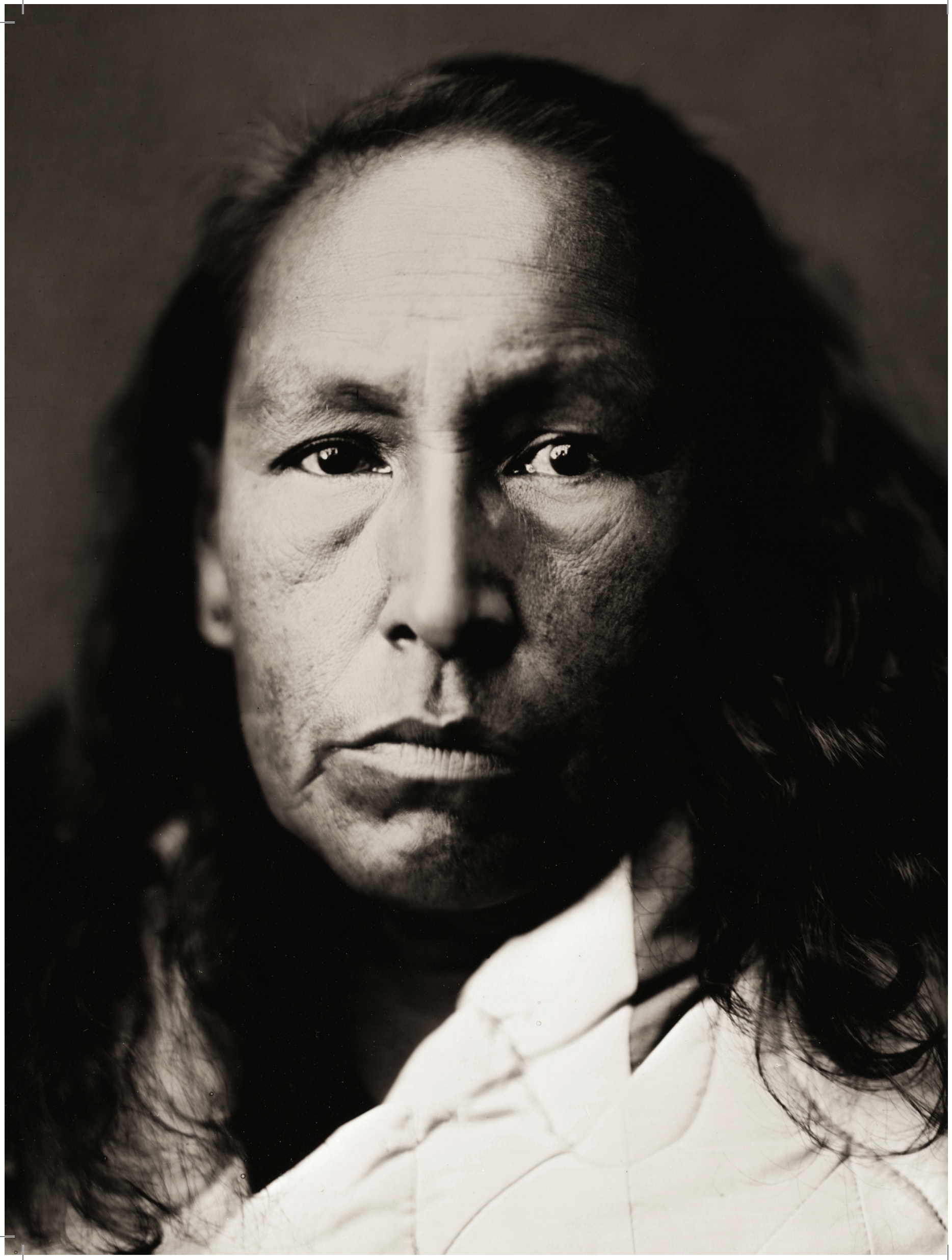

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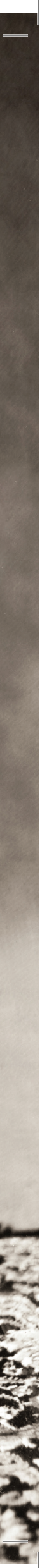

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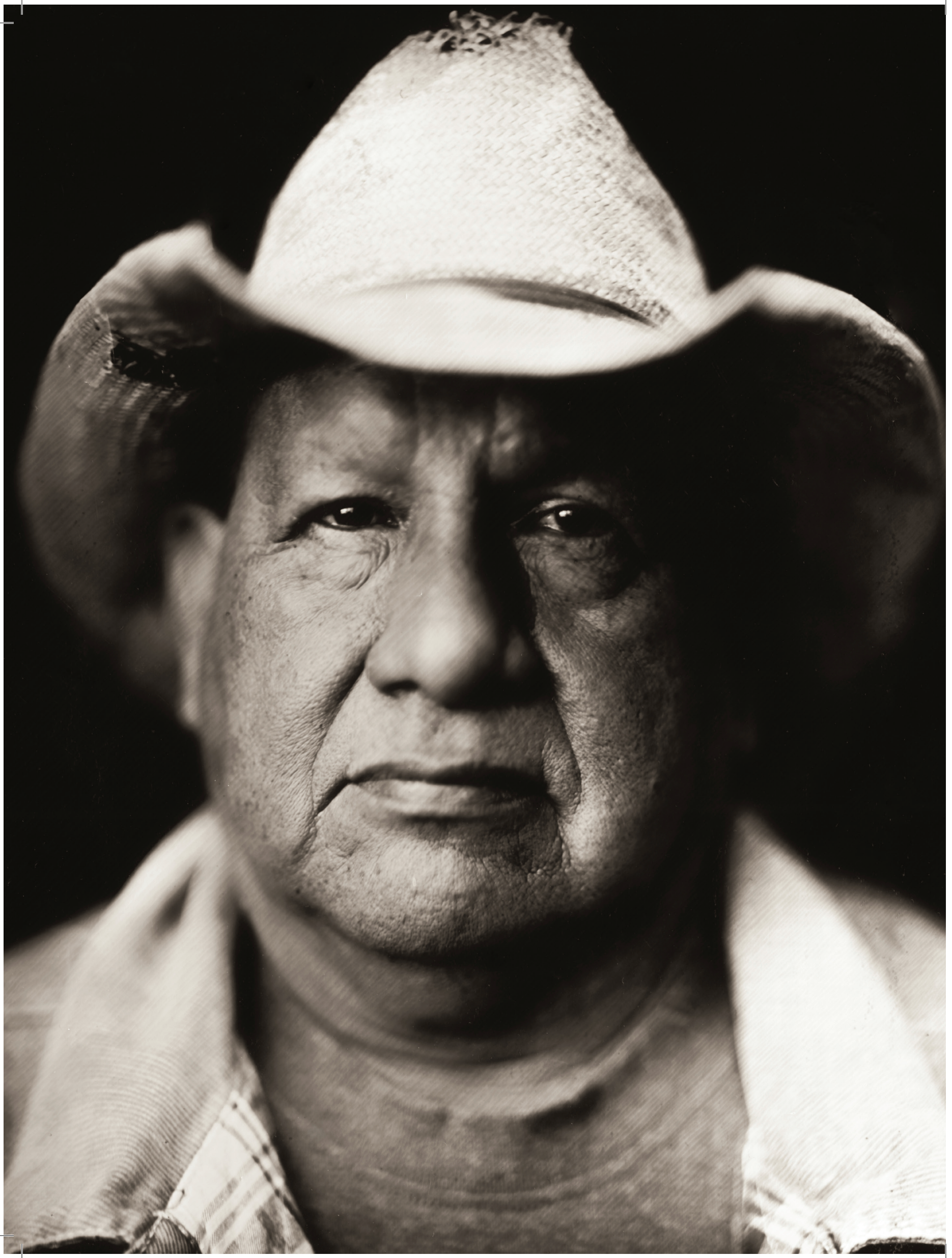

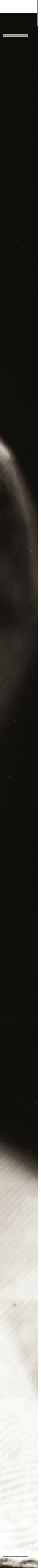

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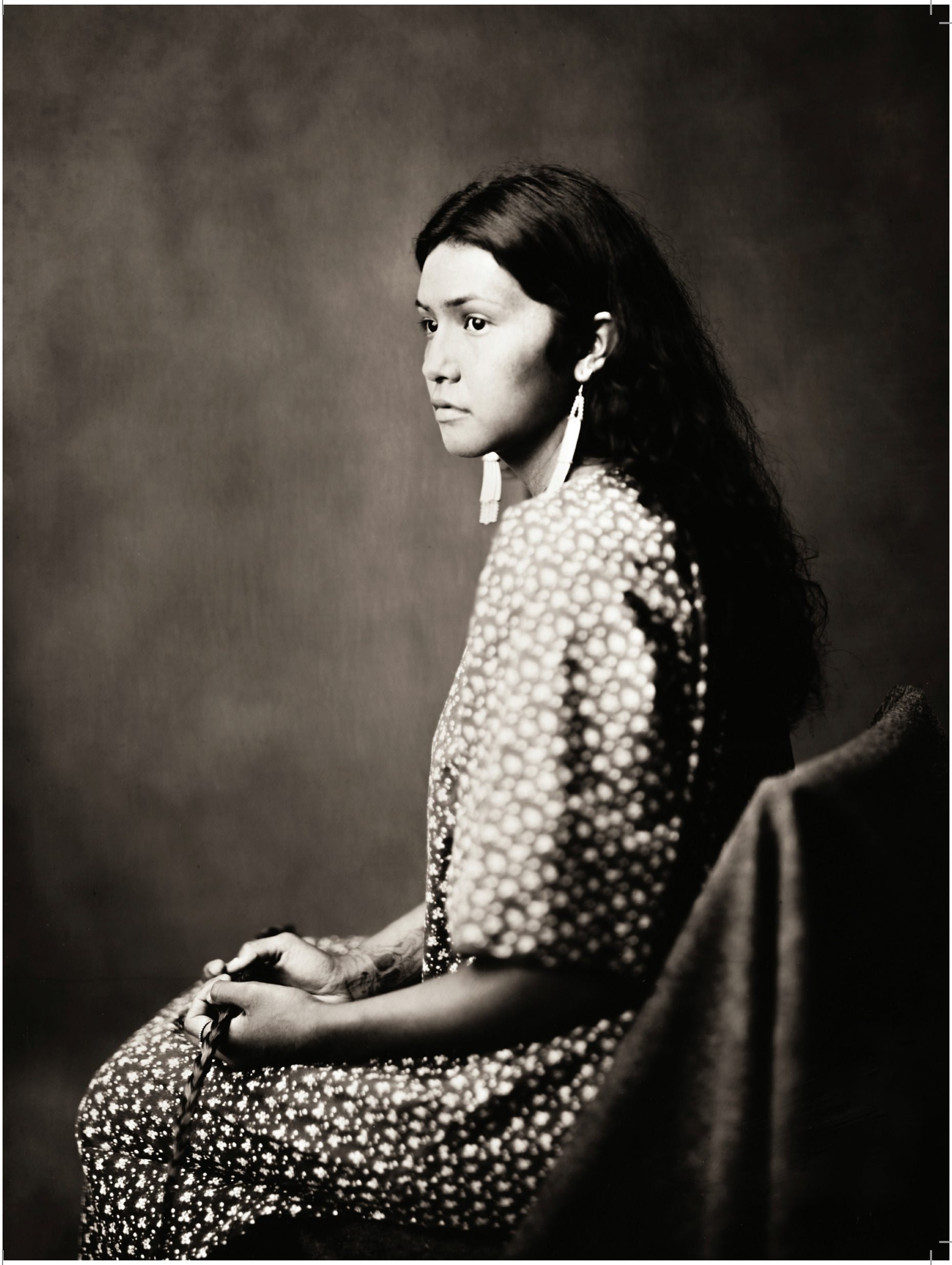

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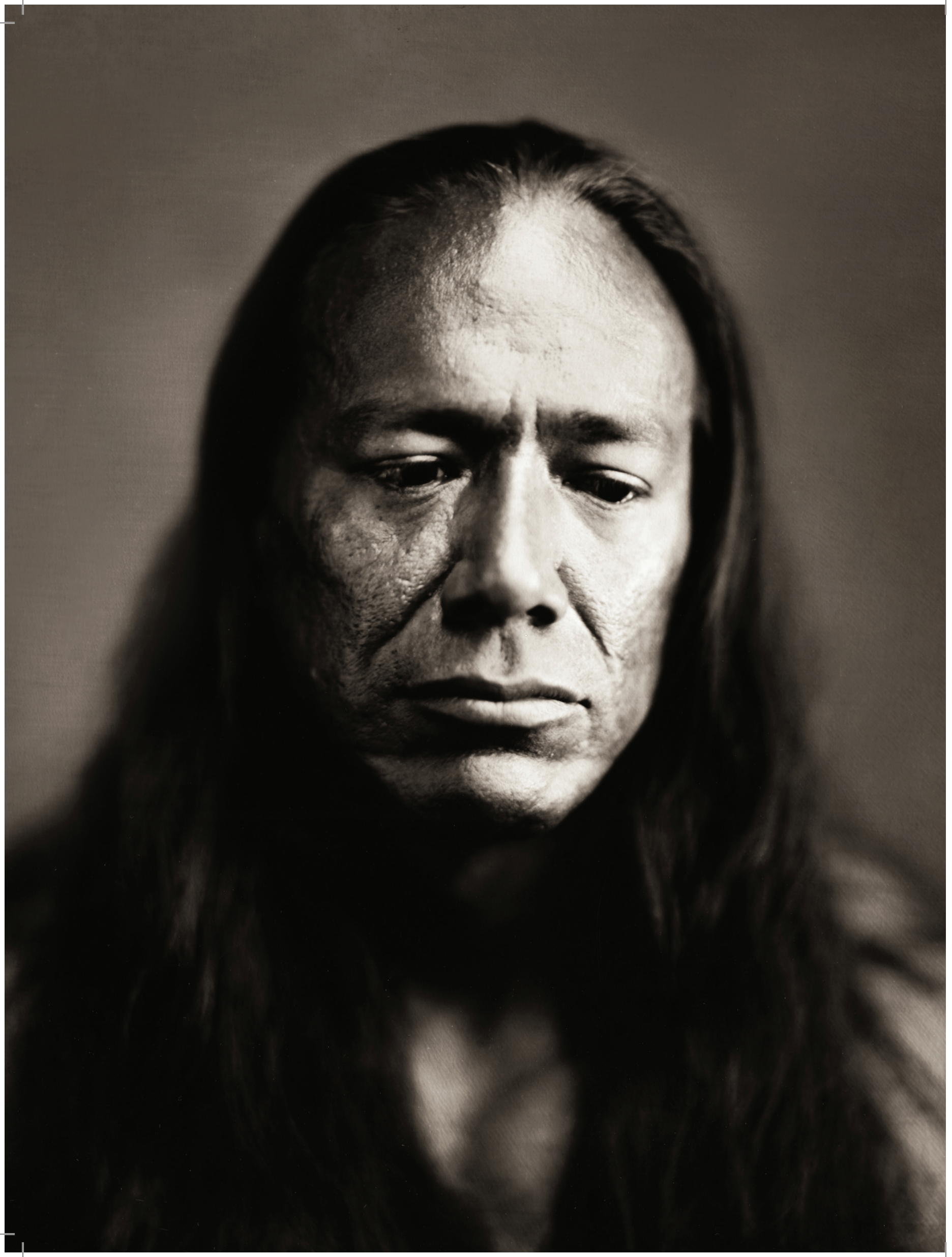

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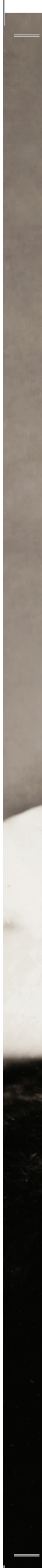

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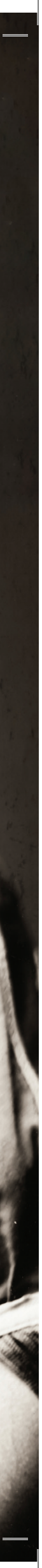
Graduate of West Point Military Academy | SHSND 2014-P-025-00543



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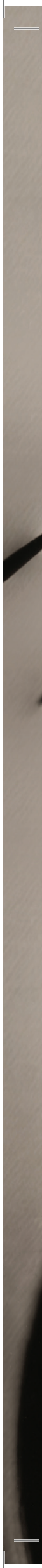

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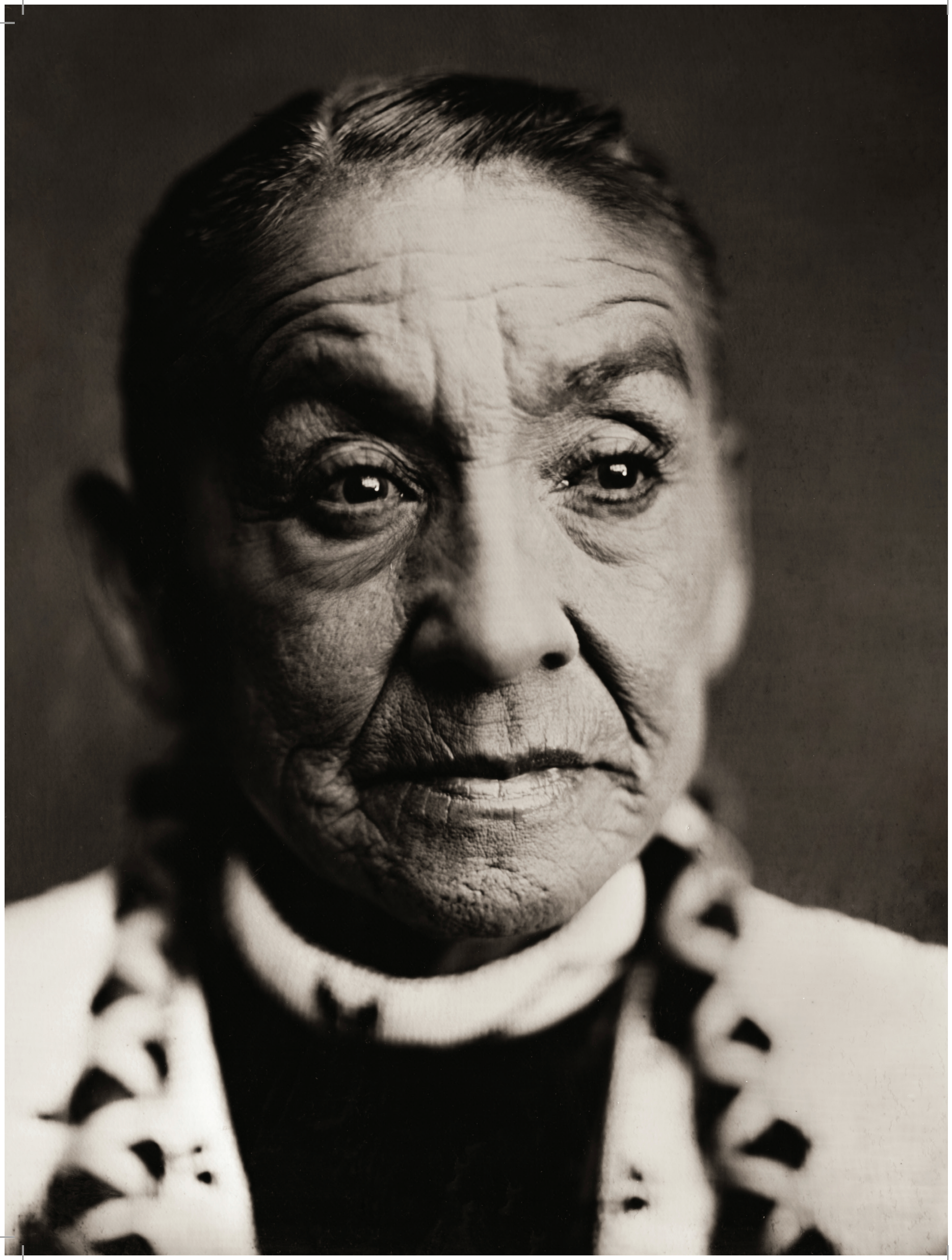
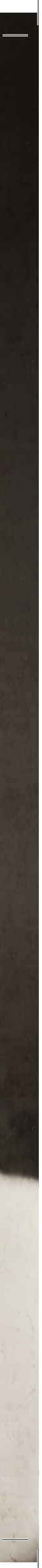
Great Grandson of Rabbithead, who was photographed by Edward Curtis in 1908





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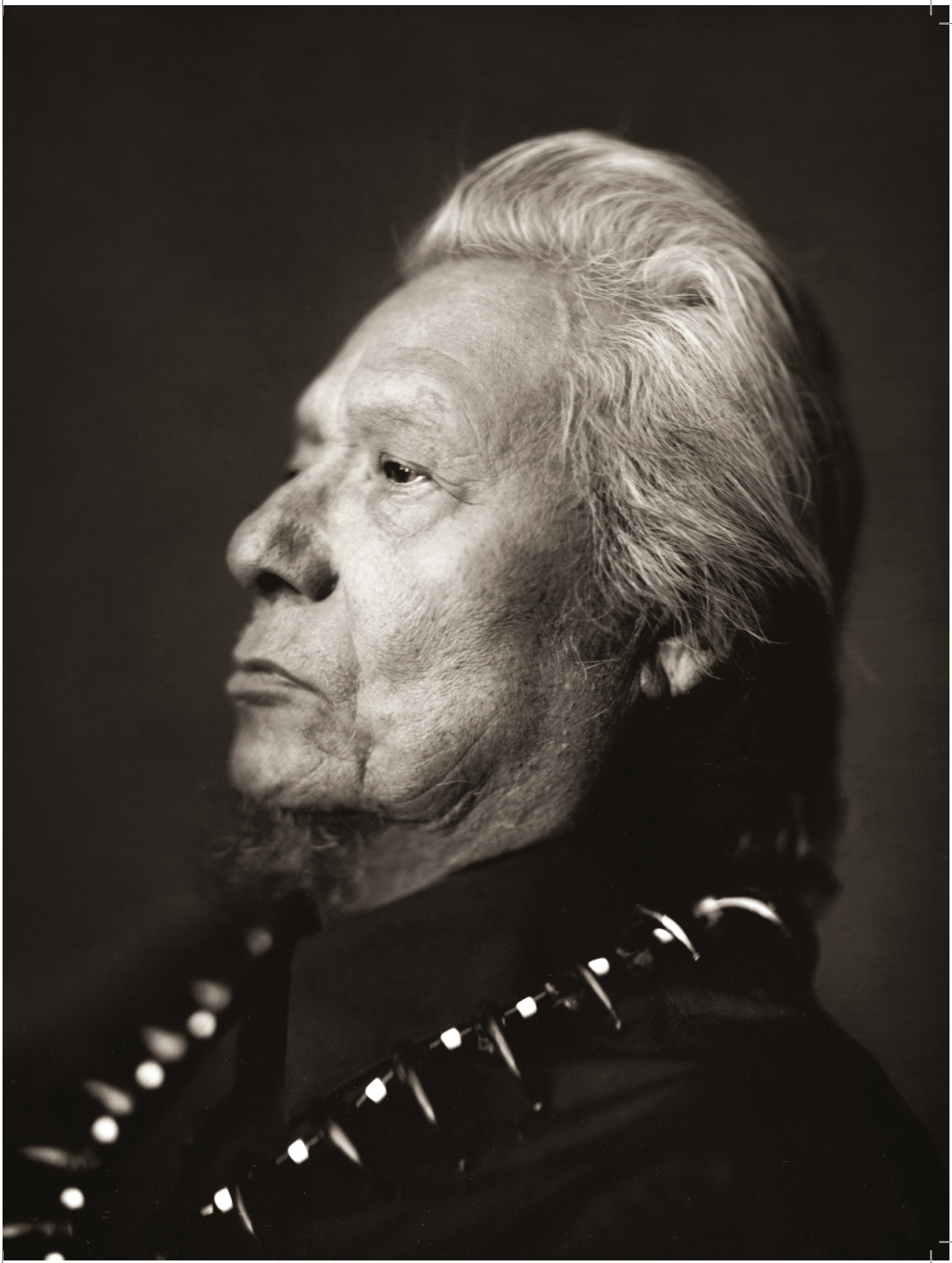

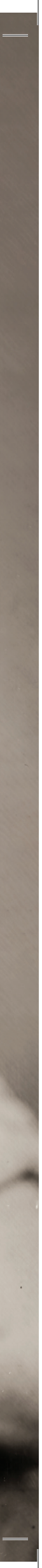

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Joseph Scott Kippenberger	***"Kippenberger"***	*Seminole Tribe of Florida*	**3828**	**3/5/21**

Joshua Wade Atcheynum **Pg. 98**	***"Two Wings"***	*Plains Cree*	**3222**	**7/26/19**
Justin Clarence Deegan	***"Charging On The Trail"***	*Arikara / Hunkpapa / Oglala*	**3037**	**2/1/19**
Karla Rae LaBatte	***"Red Hail Woman"***	*Cheyenne River Sioux*	**3208**	**7/12/19**
Kathleen Sue Big Eagle	***"Corn Seed Woman"***	*Fort Berthold Three Affiliated Tribe / Hidatsa*	**3464**	**2/28/20**
Kathy Lynn Scabbyrobe	***"Scabbyrobe"***	*Puyallup / Kainai*	**3866**	**4/2/21**
Kaylee Ruth LaCompte **Pg. 102**	***"Little Shining Star"***	*Hunkpapha Lakhota / Sichangu Lakhota*	**3748**	**12/18/20**
Kelsie Lynn Harrison-No Heart	***"No Heart"***	*Hunkpapha Lakota / Mnikhowozu*	**3667**	**10/9/20**
Kenya Marie Scabbyrobe **Pg. 105**	***"Bird Woman"***	*Puyallup / Blackfeet - Miss Puyallup 2017-2018*	**3865**	**4/2/21**
Kerry Gay Israel	***"Brings Good Spirits Home Woman"***	*Standing Rock Sioux*	**3007**	**12/28/18**
Khalani Rayne Howard	***"Rock Star Woman"***	*Standing Rock Sioux Tribe*	**3134**	**5/3/19**
Kiana Yellow Bird Brown	***"Morning Dew"***	*Arikara / Hidatsa*	**3180**	**6/21/19**
Kilyn Rain Parisien	***"Many Birds Woman"***	*Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa*	**3283**	**9/6/19**
Kimberly Ann Dickens	***"Iron Road Woman"***	*Arikara / Lakota*	**3261**	**8/23/19**
Kolette Monique Medicine	***"Red Lightning Woman"***	*Lakota / Standing Rock Sioux*	**3705**	**11/6/20**
Kory David Annis **Pg. 65**	***"Grey Cloud"***	*Lakota*	**3311**	**9/27/19**
Kray'Lea Mae Rose Archambault	***"Archambault"***	*Standing Rock Hunkpapa*	**3896**	**5/7/21**
Kristen Joy Tootoosis **Pg. 106 & Cover**	***"Sacred Flying Eagle Woman"***	*Dakota*	**2964**	**11/9/18**
Lahlee Carma LaBlanc	***"Yellow Plum Woman"***	*Dakota / Lakota / Hidatsa*	**3616**	**8/21/20**
Larry Allen Yazzie **Pg. 21**	***"Wolf Spirit"***	*Meskwaki*	**3405**	**12/20/19**
Leah Kay Omeasoo	***"Universal Woman"***	*Plains Cree*	**3280**	**9/6/19**
Lelani Rae Running Bear	***"White Flower Woman"***	*Yanktonai / Nakota*	**2996**	**12/14/18**
Leslie Faye Crow **Pg. 66**	***"Sacred Fan Woman"***	*Ihanktowan Sioux*	**3941**	**7/2/21**
Lily Anna Swaney	***"Dancing Elk Girl"***	*Hidatsa / Mandan / Salish / Kootenai / Assiniboine / Dakotah*	**3722**	**11/20/20**
Lindsey Rondell Eagle Horse	***"Eagle Horse"***	*Standing Rock Sioux*	**3159**	**6/7/19**
Lisa Marie Medchill	***"Chief Village Woman"***	*Arikara / Blackfeet*	**3235**	**8/9/19**
Lissa Yellow Bird Chase	***"Bright Star Woman"***	*Arikara / Hidatsa*	**3178**	**6/21/19**
Lloree Dawn Dickens	***"Yellow Buffalo Woman"***	*Mandan / Hidatsa / Arikara*	**3615**	**8/21/20**
Lloyd McKinley Brown III	***"Buffalo's Breath Boy"***	*Standing Rock Sioux*	**3706**	**11/6/20**
Love Melody Hopkins	***"Hopkins"***	*Standing Rock Lakota / Dakota / Arikara*	**3144**	**5/10/19**
Lucy Jean Young Man	***"Young Man"***	*Oglala / Sioux / Arikara / Hidatsa*	**3445**	**2/7/20**
Maddison Marie Spotted Bear Patneaud	***"Rainbow"***	*Ojibwe / Cree / Mandan / Hidatsa / Arikara*	**3323**	**10/4/19**
Magdalen Yellow Bird	***"Corn Silk"***	*Arikara / Hidatsa*	**3176**	**6/21/19**
Mahpiya Ota Mani Zephier **Pg. 109**	***"Walks Through The Clouds"***	*Yankton Sioux / Rosebud Sioux*	**3807**	**12/11/20**
Marcella Rose LeBeau	***"Pretty Rainbow Woman"***	*Cheyenne River Lakota*	**3290**	**9/13/19**
Marquel Tyreese Holiday **Pg. 110**	***"She Who Keeps All That is Dakota"***	*Yankton Sioux*	**3806**	**2/12/21**
Mary Everett-Bateman	***"Yellow Corn"***	*Arikara - Granddaughter of Chief Sitting Bear*	**3204**	**7/12/19**
Maymangwa Anpetula Garcia	***"Waving The Water Woman"***	*Ojibwe*	**3670**	**10/9/20**
Megan Marie Thunder Hawk	***"Red Flower Woman"***	*Standing Rock Sioux*	**3647**	**9/11/20**
Mekasi Camp Horinek	***"Coyote"***	*Ponka*	**3120**	**4/19/19**
Melanie Angel Moniz	***"Butteryfly Woman***	*MHA Nation / Nueta / Hidatsa / Sahnish*	**3621**	**8/21/20**

Melissa Jean Wise	***"Spirit Wise"***	*Standing Rock Sioux / Arikara*	**3004**	**12/28/18**
Merinda Rose Catch The Bear	***"Turtle Woman"***	*Standing Rock Sioux*	**3158**	**6/7/19**
Micah Lee Cozad	***"Cozad"***	*Comanche / Dakota*	**2976**	**11/23/18**
Micah Rae Highwalking **Pg. 78**	***"Medicine Dancer Woman"***	*Northern Cheynenne - Graduate of West Point*	**3687**	**10/23/20**
Micah William Ray Patneaud Schwamp	***"White Eagle"***	*Ojibwe / Cree / Oneida/ Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa*	**3325**	**10/4/19**
Michelle Rose Reed	***"Golden Eagle Woman"***	*Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe*	**3111**	**4/12/19**
Miisheen-Meegwun Shawanda	***"Many Plumes"***	*Ojibwe / Odawa*	**3211**	**7/19/19**
Molly Laura Fineday	***"All Around the Sky Woman"***	*Fond du Lac Nation*	**3412**	**1/3/20**
Montel Ray Carlow	***"Thunder Stone"***	*Oglala Sioux*	**3038**	**2/1/19**
Muh-Juhtheen Roberts	***"Little Thunder"***	*Choctaw / Stoney Nakoda*	**3680**	**10/16/20**
Mychel James Gregory Jonn	***"Swift Horse"***	*Arikara / Hidatsa / Navajo*	**3441**	**2/7/20**
Natasha Rae Hall-Chase	***"Red Star Woman"***	*MHA Nation - Dakota / Cree / Assiniboine / Lakota / Navajo*	**3689**	**10/23/20**
Nelrene Yellow Bird	***"White Eagle Woman"***	*Arikara / Hidatsa*	**3177**	**6/21/19**
Nevaeh White Mountain	***"White Mountain"***	*Standing Rock Sioux*	**3265**	**8/23/19**
Noodin Niimebin Shawanda **Pg. 82**	***"Wind Dancer"***	*Ojibwe / Odawa / Potawatomi / Cree*	**3210**	**7/19/19**
Oliver Hugh Yellow Bird	***"Yellow Bird"***	*Mandan / Hidatsa / Arikara*	**3203**	**6/28/19**
Olivia Josephine Delorme-Heitkamp	***"Josephine"***	*Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa*	**3209**	**7/12/19**
Otakwan Acahkos Iskwiw **Pg. 41**	***"Evening Star Woman"***	*Metis*	**3258**	**8/23/19**
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Paige Victoria Dauphinais **Pg. 62**	***"Dauphinais"***	*Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa*	**3640**	**9/4/20**
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Paris Don Wolf **Pg. 101**	***"Comes From Lightning"***	*Oglala Sioux*	**3927**	**6/4/21**
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Percy Beau Chase	***"Blue Feather"***	*MHA Nation - Child of Prairie Chicken Clan*	**3688**	**10/23/20**
Priscilla Lynn Youngbird	***"Born of Bear Woman"***	*Arikara / Hidatsa*	**3442**	**2/7/20**
RaeLeigh Lynn Morin	***"Morin"***	*Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa*	**3707**	**11/6/20**
Randi Ronelle Dogski	***"Red Pretty Voiced Woman"***	*Standing Rock Sioux / Sisseton*	**3632**	**8/28/20**
Red Feather Raven Heart **Pg. 69**	***"Eagle Plume Woman"***	*Mandan - Great Great Great Granddaughter of Chief Crows Heart*	**3390**	**12/6/19**
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Representative Tamara Jill St. John	***"Pleasing Woman"***	*Sisseton / Wahpeton*	**3191**	**6/23/19**
Robert Vernon McClain	***"McClain"***	*Red Lake Ojibwe / Muscogee Creek*	**3039**	**2/1/19**
Robin Opichee Day-Bedeau	***"In The Clouds"***	*Bois Forte Band of Chippewa*	**3085**	**3/22/19**
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Sapphire Carmella LaBlanc	***"Stands In The Center Woman"***	*Dakota / Lakota / Hidatsa*	**3618**	**8/21/20**

Sarah Rose Dubois	***"Dubois"***	*Sarah Rose Dubois - Descendant of Chief Running Antelope*	**3637**	**9/4/20**
Savannah Jade Austin **Pg. 77**	***"Red Pheasant Woman"***	*Mandan / Hidatsa / Arikara / Standing Rock Hunkpapa*	**3614**	**8/21/20**
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Sincere Joshua Young	***"They Who Will Hear Him"***	*Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa*	**3603**	**8/7/20**
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Stephen Edwin Skenandoah	***"Skenandoah"***	*Mandan / Hidatsa / Oneida*	**3299**	**9/20/19**
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Takini Long Chasing Soldier	***"Iron Woman"***	*Hunkpapa Sioux / Hidatsa*	**3891**	**5/7/21**
Talor Theodore Daniel Toavs	***"Buffalo Man"***	*Fort Peck Assiniboine*	**3815**	**2/26/21**
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Tha-Changleska Luta Hoksila with Alayna Lee Eagle Shield	***"His Red Hoop Boy"***	*Standing Rock Sioux / MHA Nation*	**3892**	**5/7/21**
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Walter Jerome Beaver, Jr.	***"Beaver"***	*Standing Rock Lakota*	**3205**	**7/12/19**
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Wanbdi Waci	***"Dancing Eagle"***	*Arikara / Ihanktonwan*	**3016**	**1/11/19**
Wesley Red Eagle Snow	***"Black Cloud"***	*Hidatsa / Arikara*	**2987**	**12/7/18**
White Elk Woman	***"White Elk Woman"***	*Mandan / Hidatsa / Arikara*	**3260**	**8/23/19**
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Wind Spirit Spotted Bear	***"Wind Spirit Spotted Bear"***	*Nueta / Hiraaca*	**3040**	**2/8/19**
Wynona Demaray	***"You Never Know When She's Coming Back"***	*Mandan / Hidatsa*	**3655**	**9/18/20**
Wyslee Grace Dubray	***"Running Red Woman"***	*Yanktonai / Mandan*	**2995**	**12/14/18**
Xander Jackson Ripley-Jaakola	***"Black Crow"***	*Arikara / Ojibwe*	**3382**	**11/22/19**
Xia Tynielle American Horse Brave Bull	***"Brings Thunder Woman"***	*Cheyenne River Sioux / Standing Rock Sioux*	**3858**	**4/2/21**
Yvonne (Ivy) Kathryn Vainio	***"Mist On The Water Woman"***	*Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe*	**3416**	**1/3/20**

"*Northern Plains Native Americans: A Modern Wet Plate Perspective*" series
is curated by the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

For information contact the North Dakota State Archives.

Acknowledgement

Shane Balkowitsch

I was elated and relieved the day I reached 500 portraits for this series. It was a portrait of my now friend Leslie Faye Crow "Sacred Fan Woman", Ihanktowan Sioux taken on July 2nd, 2021. This was my 3941st plate since my very first wet plate exposure in 2012. I knew the portrait would prompt the publishing of this second volume. Signifying for me another important milestone for the series. As always, I want to thank my family for constantly beleiving in me. My wife Bonnie and our children Abby, Greyson, Alyvia and little Mahliya. They always have my back no matter what. I love you all very much.

I also want to thank for following individuals for all that they have done to support my work over the years. A heart-felt thanks to Herb Ascherman, Jr., Timothy Reed, Claudia Berg, Kevin Cederstrom, Chad Nodland, Ernie LaPointe, Kevin Klein, Doug Hanson, Clay Jenkinson, Mike LaLonde, James Shaw, Karel Sovak, Andreas Reh (Germany), Ryan Stander, Jeffrey Sklan, Paul Noot, Jason Lueder, Chelsy Ciavarella, Marek Djos, Gary Adkisson, Tony Richards (United Kingdom), Emily Kubischta, Laine Pope, David Borlaug, Lindsay Meidinger, Alex Timmermans (Netherlands), Joy Pitts, Greg DeSaye, Bill Peterson, Roger Kubik, Monsignor James P. Shea, Josh Withers, Victory Tischler-Blue, Lou Hafermehl, Larry Skogen, Douglas Jensen, Jason Morsette, Mike Seminary, Dakota Goodhouse, Rolf Eggers, Sean Coffman, Borut Peterlin (Slovenia), Martin Schultz (Switzerland), Mike Williams, Lionel Pernet (Switzerland), Mark Walton (Canada), Gordon Fraser (United Kingdom), James Kyle, Linda Christman and always my sister Margaret Yellow-Bird Gonzalez.

I posthumously thank my friends Chris Cardozo from Cardozo Fine Art and Bob Harris from KFGO Radio. Chris was an expert on the works of Edward Curtis and went out of his way to support me on this creative journey. Bob always shared his passion for my imagery over the air waves with such enthusiasm. I also want to acknowledge the passing of my Hidatsa brother Jason Two Crow (Page 73) who took his final journey during the editing of this book. It brought his family great comfort knowing that his image would appear in this volume and that he has plates being preserved at the State Historical Society of North Dakota and the Pitt Rivers Museum at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom. All three of you gentlemen will be greatly missed.

More importantly, this series would not be possible without the trust and friendship of the Native American community. I am humbled by the amount of support this series receives from all corners of the globe. As the body of work grows more and more people are traveling thousands of miles to my backyard studio in Bismarck. It is so rewarding to host these sitters and to learn about their culture and their people. There is an ever increasing sense of responsibility that I feel as I continue on this creative path. I simply want to place my worthy subjects in the best light possible. I hope this sense of duty and friendship manifests itself in the work that I am creating. All I can do is toil over the work one plate at a time. It is not for me to determine the significance of this body of work, but for others to determine long after I am gone. It is my hope that these images will withstand the test of time and that the viewer in the future will have a small glimpse into who we were at this point in history. My sitters and I should ask for nothing more. We should be content by simply knowing we did our best.

Shane Bart Balkowitsch "Shadow Catcher" Maa'isda tehxixi Agu'agshi – Hidatsa
Nostalgic Glass Wet Plate Studio, Bismarck, North Dakota

Northern Plains Native Americans: *A Modern Wet Plate Perspective*

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It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.

Theodore Roosevelt

Speech at the Sorbonne, Paris, April 23, 1910

A Note About The Series

This book, volume two in the series of four that will be published, represents a careful selection of 50 of my favorite images from the second 250 plates made out of an eventual 1000. When I reach the milestone of 750 plates another selection of 50 images will comprise volume three in the series, and so on until we reach four volumes.

Colophon

First Published in 2022 by

Shane Balkowitsch, Ambrotypist
Nostalgic Glass Wet Plate Studio
2703 Big Sky Circle
Bismarck, ND 58503
United States

shane@balkowitsch.com
http://sharoncol.balkowitsch.com/wetplate.htm

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